THE TRINITY OF EVIL

I. INFIDELITY

II. IMPURITY

III. INTEMPERANCE

CANON WILBERFORCE

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I. *INFIDELITY.*
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III. *INTEMPERANCE.*

BY THE REV.
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PREFACE.

THE three articles which follow, upon Infidelity, Impurity, and Intemperance, reprinted by request, are, with the exception of the appendix to the last, part of a series entitled "Topics of the Times," published in the *Christian Commonwealth*, a journal conspicuous for its courageous advocacy of right and truth, and deservedly commanding an extensive circulation. They assume no pretension to be other than popular, and represent a slight attempt to consider the duty of the Christian

towards three dangerous developments of evil in our day.

The key-note of the whole series in the *Christian Commonwealth* was struck in the first article, in the words of St. Paul, "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. iii. 20), and the underlying thought in all is, that Christ hath provided by means of the living members of His Body a counteracting agency to the ever increasing moral degradation of the natural man. It is essential to observe, that, without venturing upon a definition of the Church, it is assumed that a "citizen of heaven" is not merely one who has accepted the profession of Christianity and identified

himself with some external organization under the benediction of Rome, Constantinople, or Canterbury, but one who, having come in all conscious weakness to the living Lord Jesus, who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, is IN CHRIST by faith; such an one, though his realization of it may be clouded and dim, though he may be conscious of much imperfection, is nevertheless one who is "in Christ before God, and for Christ before men;" he is the heavenly citizen, that is, he has a residence, a life, a duty in one condition of being, or world, and a citizenship and home in another. A Christian of this stamp, possessing the secret of a quiet mind

and the impulse of an active life, will be used by His Master in saving souls from sin, guiding men into truth, making lives and homes brighter, happier, purer, by bringing into them the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

This principle of counteraction is a universal ideal ever in process of realization. In our bodies are powerful acids and chemical forces, which would destroy us if they were not neutralized by the presence of the mystery of life; against life they have no power; similarly, the forces of evil within the believer are neutralized by the presence of Him who is THE LIFE, and apart from Him we can do nothing. Simi-

larly, again, the destructive and corruptive influences in the world can only be effectively checked by the benediction-giving and humanity-exalting influences of the Christ manifested in His people, to whom He has said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." This antiseptic influence of believers is actively but secretly operating. In all ranks there are men and women with hearts loyally devoted to a personal Lord Jesus, working secretly like the leaven hidden in the meal, to whom it is virtually said, "Fear not, Paul, I have given thee them that sail with thee."

It is to be hoped that some who profess and call themselves Christians, will

be led to consider the grave question how far they are in this sense "citizens of heaven." The name Christian has been secularized and profaned, the ethical system implied by it discredited and dishonoured, not through opponents but through exponents. It is significant that the natives blessed by the missionary labours of Dr. Judson, ever declined to speak of him as Christian: the name savoured of rum and the slave-trade; but recognising in him the living embodiment of his creed, they called him "the Jesus-Christ man." Upon the true "Jesus-Christ men" will devolve the duty of counteracting Infidelity, Impurity, and Intemperance.

The position accorded in the Trinity of Evil to Infidelity may be considered open to criticism, and in a general sense it might perhaps be affirmed that a man's opinions have no direct effect upon the morality of his actions; nevertheless the heart is affected by the head, and the heart is the mainspring of conduct; certainly it does not appear to have been given to the deniers of the faith to bless, enlighten, and elevate mankind. We are prepared, however, with abundant proof that the tendency of modern atheism is directly immoral, and that audacity of opinion not infrequently leads to atrocity of conduct. It is impossible, consistent with necessary

reticence, to do much more than hint at this branch of the subject; but from a work entitled "Elements of Social Science," amongst numerous paragraphs too gross for repetition, I extract the following, "Chastity, so far from being a virtue, is invariably a great natural sin." "Prostitution should be regarded as a valuable substitute for a better state of things;" and in a pamphlet from the pen of the most prominent and aggressive unbeliever of the day the following expression occurs, referring to the "Elements of Social Science": "This work I specially recommend."

The article upon Impurity was published previous to the actual com-

mencement of the recent government prosecution of Mr. Stead. To know that Mr. Stead, a man remarkable for tender sympathy and self-sacrificing readiness to succour the wronged, and whose lofty motives Mr. Justice Lopes pronounced unimpeachable, is actually in prison, whilst the notorious Mrs. Jeffries, the procuress for a dissolute plutocracy, is not only at large without bail, but once more pursuing her iniquitous traffic to the open scandal of her neighbours, is a grievous shock to the moral sense. Mr. Stead is a candidate for our admiration rather than our pity. "Patiently to suffer for the truth's sake," is to "lay up a more

exceeding weight of glory;" the fierce execrations of the Attorney-General will not harm him. When "Balaam is hired against" a man that he might curse him, "the Lord turns the curse into a blessing" (Neh. xiii. 2).

It is satisfactory to know that, amidst all the decay and inability to distinguish between right and wrong characteristic of modern society, the inner heart of the nation is sound upon this question; and to mention Mr. Stead's name in any large assembly of working men is to kindle an enthusiasm bursting out into cheer after cheer. It is simply undeniable that Mr. Stead's action alone secured the passing of the Criminal

Law Amendment Act, under which measure ninety-eight cases of outrage have been punished in six weeks, *forty-seven of which were perpetrated upon little girls under ten years of age.* As to the Judge's gratuitous assertion that the articles in the *Pall Mall* "would ever be a disgrace to journalism," there are tens of thousands of thinking men and women who agree with the words in *The Christian* newspaper, a journal which has throughout earned the gratitude and admiration of all social reformers by its courage and ability, that this irrelevant, prejudiced, and exaggerated utterance will ever remain "a disgrace to jurisprudence." The ruth-

lessness with which all through this shameful business the true reformers have been hunted out for popular vengeance, for slight errors in judgment, and the vampires and voluptuaries suffered to go free, receives an additional illustration in the bitter persecution of Dr. Heywood Smith. The persistent attempt to blast the reputation of, and extrude from every medical institute, a pure-minded and honest-hearted physician on account of what was at its worst but a generous error, is a serious blot upon the honourable medical profession, the more especially as they cordially approve of certain Acts under which many thousands of women have

been compulsorily exposed to medical examination, with no pretence to any high or generous intention.

From the fires of lust to the coal mine whence they are replenished the transition is natural. Thousands of thinking men in the present day are becoming more and more convinced that the chief agent in promoting vice and social corruption is intoxicating drink, which weakens the will and inflames the desires, and "for the present distress" are abstaining from alcohol themselves and discouraging its use in others.

In an atmosphere thus heavy with sensuality and corruption, the heavenly citizen finds his post of duty and his

call for action; true it is, that "No man may deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him;" yet are we, each one of us, emphatically our brother's keepers; and, identified with our Lord and Master, living in touch with Him, we can become in a measure our brethren's burden-bearers also. That is a sweet fiction of early days, which imagines Peter the apostle wearily bearing the sins of the world up a rugged mountain side, and meeting a little child, who invites him to transfer the burden to his infant shoulders. He places his burden upon the child. "Now," commands his mysterious visitor, "carry me." He does so, and

behold the burden has become as a feather's weight. Thus is "Christ in us" the bearer of our burdens, and as we grow up into Him in all things, we, as Christ-bearers, become the burden-bearers of others.

When the ascending Lord spoke those words before the cloud at Bethany received Him out of human sight, "Ye shall be witnesses unto ME," He epitomized in a single sentence the whole catalogue of the earthly duties of the heavenly citizen. It is to no sentiment or idea, however transcendent, to no new religious philosophy, however apparently suited to the world's need; it is to a Person, to the Lord Himself

as the living Friend of sinners, the one conqueror of Death and Hades, that we have to witness. It is for us to convince a fallen sinning world that there IS—not there once was—One among them whom as yet they know not, and whom to know is life eternal.

God help us each one thus to witness.

"Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

DEANERY, SOUTHAMPTON.
December, 1885.

INFIDELITY.

I.

INFIDELITY.

"Philip saith unto him, COME AND SEE."—ST JOHN i. 46.

PHILIP was echoing a word of Royal invitation full of force and power that was often on his Master's lips when he answered Nathanael's justifiable scepticism with the courageous sentence, COME AND SEE. It is as though he had said, "I have challenged the orthodox belief, I have declared to you an experience beyond the lines of conventionality. You ask me for my proof. I reply, Bestir thyself, experimentalise, investigate, analyse, and thou

shalt know; in a sentence, 'come and see.'" There is nothing suggestive of timidity, uncertainty, want of assurance, about this bold invitation, and, God be praised! it reaches far beyond the temporary circumstances which called it forth. It stands firm after the lapse of eighteen centuries as a motto, an example, and an encouragement. It is the voice of Jesus speaking to the hearts of doubting, anxious, care-harassed men; it is a call to intimacy, a guarantee of victory, a promise of rest; it is real, individual, and close; it is an invitation, not to a system, but to a person: "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."

Let us endeavour to apply this Royal invitation to one of the practical difficulties of modern life. I am speaking from the assumption, somewhat profound, that we

have in a measure realized our heavenly citizenship. It is well not to flinch from this, for nothing can more impress the stamp of consecrated purpose and practical usefulness on life. To be a conscious citizen of heaven, so far from emancipating a man from intelligent participation in the duties of this earth life, accentuates his corresponding obligation to be light in the world and salt of the earth. If one who professes that his heart is in heaven is living to himself a non-illuminating life, his creed is not authenticated by his conduct, and he knows not the alphabet of his faith.

A man must be blind to the signs of the times who knows not that we are living in "a day of trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy." A great and terrible cry is

rising up from a sin-polluted world. Ever and anon the veil is lifted from moral putrescence, which threatens to poison the nation, and courts the doom of the verdict of God: "Shall I not visit for these things saith the Lord, and shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

Amongst the prominent cancers of modern society there stand out three taller than their fellows, closely interdependent in their nature, yet each so independently defiling that they constitute a trinity of destructive influence. They are Infidelity, Impurity, and Intemperance. Of the existence of the first of these, its causes, probable effects, and the duty of the Christian towards it, we would speak to-day.

I do not know that it would be correct to say that there is now more unbelief in

proportion to the population than formerly, but it has arrived at a new development. It is more patent, more aggressive, and above all more recorded, and therefore more mischievous. There are, probably, not more atmospheric disturbances than in days gone by, but our attention is more drawn to them. Storms are telegraphed from America, and daily meteorological reports keep the subject under our notice. Modern unbelief in like manner is kept constantly under our observation. At a recent census in France, out of a population of twenty-nine millions, seven and a-half millions openly declared themselves to be of no religious belief; and in England, though I am not aware of any census having been attempted, there is not a town of any size without its organized society of unbelievers.

A considerable proportion of the unbelief of the day is doubtless confined to frivolous sceptical chatter spreading its propaganda in fashionable magazines. Another moiety is undoubtedly of moral origin, in accordance with the saying of Augustine, that a man who allowed his senses to rule him carried about with him five cogent arguments against the faith. In his case the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life choke the Word and blind the spiritual perception. But there is a sufficiently formidable residuum which is not necessarily immoral, and is serious, determined, and aggressive.

If we permit ourselves to inquire into the more prominent causes for the spread of unbelief, I fear the true and reasonable conclusion will bring shame to many of us.

How much, for example, is directly to be attributed to the utterly unspiritual lives of professed believers? How much to the unacting orthodoxy of rigid dogmatists who, while adhering to the letter of Catholic tradition, will not stretch out a finger to assist in removing evils which are turning this world into a gaol, a lazar-house, a hell for millions? How much to the healthy revolt of a developing humanity against cramping sacerdotalisms, soul-withering limitations, and theological caricatures of the Divine Being? How much to the timid, grudging, persecuting attitude adopted in times past by men of religion to the researches of science? Surely it is with a tender hand that the ecclesiastical descendants of the men who in the name of the Lord burnt Bruno and persecuted

Galileo, and sinned against "Him without whom nothing was made" by quenching the light of science, should deal with unbelief. When tempted to be harsh, dogmatic, and contemptuous towards those who are unwisely, under the name of Agnosticism, imagining that they can bow Almighty God out of His own universe, they should remember that science has had her martyrs, and at the hand of theologians, and that it was Augustine, the beloved of the Catholic Church, the theologian of the giant intellect, who by pronouncing an anathema upon all who affirmed the existence of antipodes, threw the arm of ecclesiastical sanction around error, and strengthened the hands of the thrice-accursed Inquisition in burning and torturing those who were the pioneers of the world's light, liberty, and knowledge.

What will be the probable effect of a widespread and somewhat arrogant denial of the faith? Upon the Church, the invisible Body of Christ, its effect must needs be stimulating and purifying; the progress of vital faith is advanced, and its pungency, as salt of the earth, intensified, by constant questioning and sifting. A period of toleration and patronage exercises a soporific influence on the heavenly citizen, and the vitality and the sin-resisting power of Christ's mystical body are suspended in proportion as its mighty truths are imprisoned by limiting definitions or crystallised into dogmas to be received without conviction upon authority. A pillar of the early Church is credited with the saying that if the word "Trinity" had never been invented the thing signified by the word would probably never have been

doubted. Is there not a moiety of truth in his utterance? has not the desire for a definite dogma imprisoned within the walls of a series of propositions led to a species of Tritheism, from which that which is wrongly denominated Unitarianism—for so far as we can judge this form of negation does not teach the "unity" but the "unicity" of God—is a not unnatural recoil? Whereas the "thing signified," namely, the Tripartite oneness of the Divine Being, is "clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made" (Rom. 1. 20). And "trinity in unity" is found everywhere an incontrovertible fact amidst the verities of nature, using nature in its widest sense, comprehending all that is "in the round ocean, and the living air, and the blue sky, and in the mind of man." I think we may say that the atheism of the day, with its

unsparing criticism, and its determined iconoclasm, though it may shake visible churches to their foundations, will leave the true faith, stripped of human accretions, purer than it found it. We read of a devouring fire destroying many homesteads and vineyards in the Pyrenees, but opening by its heat deep fissures through which gleamed molten silver hitherto unknown. May it thus be with the Body of Christ. May the fire of attack drive many to open confession and strengthen the faith by increasing the reality of the witness.

When, however, we come to consider the probable effect of atheism on the nation, we can only view it as an unmixed evil. Those best qualified to form an opinion have again and again declared that atheism, inasmuch as it is a determined foe to liberty, is nationally destructive. "God," said a master mind

of France, at the close of the great revolution, "is as necessary to a nation as liberty." Voltaire, the very patron saint of atheists, has emphasized this thought in the following pungent sentences: "If the world were governed by atheists, it would be as well to be under the immediate rule of those infernal beings who are depicted to us full of fury against their victims. In a word, atheists who have power in their hands would be as mischievous to the human race as superstitious persons; certainly their principles will not be opposed to the assassinations and poisonings which will seem necessary. They must tend to all crimes in the storms of life. The atheist, crafty, ungrateful, calumnious, plundering, bloody, reasons and acts as if he is sure of impunity on the part of men. For if there is no God the monster is his own

god; he immolates to himself whatever he desires or whatever is an obstacle in his way. The most tender prayers, the best reason, make no impression upon him." ("Works," Vol. I. pages 136-139. Paris, 1837 edition.) To the testimony of Voltaire we may add the recent experience of the ribald blasphemy for which the editor of an infidel newspaper was (unwisely as we think) imprisoned, together with the soul-destroying immoralities inculcated in "The Fruits of Philosophy," and the conclusion at which we arrive is that for men who profess to long for national progress under the attractive watchwords of Liberty, Fraternity, Equality, to encourage or trifle with atheism is politically as suicidal as morally it is discreditable.

On the other hand, we are convinced that the Gospel is the nursery of liberty. "My

model," said a statesman recently, "is Oliver Cromwell." "Mine," replied his friend, also a member of Parliament, "is Jesus Christ." He was right. The man who, in the exercise of the franchise or the wielding of political influence, has resolved to stand on the principles of Jesus Christ, is the best friend of his country that his country can have. Lord Shaftesbury records how he heard Lord Macaulay, in the House of Commons, declare that "the man who speaks or writes a syllable against Christianity is guilty of high treason against the civilization of mankind;" and Froude, in his essay on Calvinism, expresses the same thought when he says, "All that we call modern civilization in a sense which deserves the name is the visible expression of the transforming power of the Gospel." It would be a labour of love to trace the truth

of this proposition down the ages. In spite of the not infrequent, reactionary, and barbarous cruelties of the visible Church, which in its excommunications and persecutions sinned more against Christianity than humanity, we can recognise that every step in moral and political progress may be traced back to the Babe of Bethlehem, who, though He never promoted a single rebellion, and never formulated revolutionary propaganda, quietly sowed moral seed and gave impulses to human thought which have changed the aspect of the world, and will, in the end, subdue all things to God.

Mirabeau, when he was asked how he would inculcate the principles of national liberty, replied that he would begin with the infant in the cradle and let his first lisping utterance be the name of Washington. The

believer will rise higher than this, and say, Would you have a nation free indeed—politically, socially, morally, blessedly free; would you witness the spread of principles that must inevitably, if they have free play, overturn all despotisms and crush out more than half the sorrows of human nature: begin with the infants in the cradles, and let the first name they lisp be the all-prevailing name of JESUS: the Divine Regenerator of the world, the Infinite and Eternal Head of humanity, the Immanuel, God with us; for "If the Son of God shall make you free, then shall you be free indeed."

It remains for us to consider the important question of the duty of the heavenly citizen towards prevailing unbelief. And first, he must be deeply convinced of the

truth of the proposition, *Magna est veritas et prævalebit.* In "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," his contention will be rather to persuade man than to defend God; not, Uzzah-like, to imagine that he will uphold that which is tottering. This reflection will free him from timidity as to any supposed conflict between science and revelation. "Without Him was not anything made that was made." The investigating faculty of man is the boring tool whereby the glories of the living God are dug out of His mines, and in the reverent pursuit of natural science the thoughts of God become visible. The study of Zoology, Geology, and Ichthyology are directly prescribed to us in the book of Job as stepping-stones to the knowledge of God: "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach

thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; or, speak to the earth and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee" (Job xii. 7). Noble-hearted Charles Kingsley, whose truly great mind pushed its way upwards through the false sophisms and intellectual entanglements of the age, drank deep of the cup of science, and the light of the Spirit of God within him was fed by the flame; with his own lips he told me that it had brought him nearer to his God, and his dying words, so calm and true and trusting, were the witness that he was passing to an endless life with God. It is a libel upon true science that it can ever rob us of our Father; nay, rather has it unveiled Him; and it behoves us publicly to thank science for what it has done: it has swept away cobwebs, it has

cleared the atmosphere of false gods and superstitions; by its discovery of evolution (if evolution be true) it has brought us even more face to face with an intelligent, thinking all-producer, than direct creation. If we may credit the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, a marked decline of rationalism in the German universities has been the direct fruit of its labours; by its disproof of spontaneous generation, its demonstration of the continuity of the laws of life, the prominence it has given to adaptation, causation, and design in nature, it has driven the coarser atheism of the past to assume a softer title; and if David in days of comparative scientific darkness wrote, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," modern research, when carried to its logical issue, through microscope, spectroscope, tele-

scope, and scalpel, deliberately and scientifically replies—Amen.

Secondly, the heavenly citizen will do well to counteract infidel propaganda through the printing press; the tracts and leaflets of the "Christian Evidence" Society should be widely distributed, and it would be expedient for all who are interested in working men's clubs and mechanics' institutes to supply them freely with the admirable and instructive pamphlets written by Mr. Hastings, of Boston, and sold by Messrs. Bagster under the title of "The Anti-Infidel Library." One of these tracts, upon "The Inspiration of the Bible," is one of the most pungent and useful ever published. The method of counteracting unbelief by public debate between selected champions is eminently unsatisfactory. The sharp intellectual fencing

necessary savours too much of the "kingdoms of this world." But where the Christian champion flinches not from Saul's armour, and can condescend to his adversaries' weapons, though the spectacle is not edifying the victory is sure, as may be proved by a study of the shorthand writer's report of the celebrated "South Place Debate" between Mr. Bradlaugh and the Rev. Brewin Grant.

But, thirdly, *non tali auxilio,* these are not the characteristic weapons of a true citizen of heaven; with them he may silence, not convince; confound, not convert the denier of the faith. He differs even from the patriot and the philanthropist, in that to him believing is not an intellectual but a spiritual process. They who know the "secret of the Lord" will rather lead the

anxious doubter away from systems, controversies, and debates into the presence of the Lord Himself. Philip of Bethsaida, in the history before us, illustrates the true method; he had "found Jesus," had recognised in Him the Christ; God's answer to the hunger and thirst of humanity. Such a knowledge evidences its reality by its self-communicativeness; he rushes to his friend; without preface, argument, or explanation, he says, "I have found the Christ;" he is met at once with a chilling retort, which could easily be modernised into the words, "You are the victim of an enthusiasm, you are led astray by emotion; you have theology, ecclesiasticism, orthodoxy, and prophecy against you; 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?'" Mark the simplicity of his reply; he cannot argue the

question on its merits ; he has not the power afterwards exhibited by Saul of Tarsus, of "proving by the Scriptures that this is the very Christ," but *he knows what he has found*, he can at least invite trial, he is not afraid to subject the blessed truth which was flooding his whole being with its vivid light to the most searching analysis, the closest investigation : "Philip saith unto him, Come and see." Here is the one absolutely irrefragable Christian evidence : the power of Jesus Christ to satisfy every human instinct, to fill the heart to overflowing, to save to the uttermost, to elevate the affections, to perfect the nature, to ennoble the character of fallen man. This is the witness that we, citizens of heaven, ought to be able to give in our own lives. Jesus our Risen Lord says, Ye are My epistles, "*Ye* shall be wit-

nesses unto Me." "As my Father sent Me, even so send I you." We *ought* to be able to say,—

"Marvel not that Christ in glory
All my inmost heart hath won;
Not a star to cheer my darkness,
But a light beyond the sun.

"I have heard the voice of Jesus,
Tell me not of aught beside;
I have seen the face of Jesus,
All my soul is satisfied."

Inasmuch as the best sermon is a life, our life should so witness that men would be compelled to acknowledge that "the life we live in the flesh we live by the power of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave Himself for us." In so far as it is not so, we are responsible for some of the unbelief; and before we blame sceptics let us to our knees in penitence and prayer. But,

thank God, we can overwhelm an inquirer with examples that come under our knowledge in evangelistic work. It is simply a phenomenon in the realm of fact that thousands of men and women, sin-stained and polluted, have been radically changed and are kept from falling by the power of the living Lord Jesus, to whom they have entrusted themselves. We ask the doubter to "come and see," to inquire and investigate, to put himself in the way of knowing something of the radical conversion of those who have found the Lord Jesus, and inform us if there is any other power or influence known which can take possession of a degraded human being, a mass of hereditary taints and warps and scars, and quicken, inspire, purify him; eradicating surely, though sometimes slowly, the tendencies of life-long

habits. If there were but one such case known, it would be as worthy, as one has said, "of a place and explanation as any alkali in your crucibles, any birdtrack or ornitholite in the sand," and they are occurring every day. That they are not without their effect may be proved by the following extract from one of the secularist newspapers :—

"The unquestionable power that Christianity possesses, under certain given conditions, of making a worthless life valuable, of reforming a depraved man or woman, forms a most interesting and profitable study. Instances of its ability to do this are to be found on every side of us. Much of its strength lies in the fact that it can justifiably boast of reclamatory achievements that compel the admiration and respect of mankind. It suc-

ceeds in effecting rescues from evil in cases that other moral agencies would regard as almost hopeless. . . . Speaking only for myself, I confess my ignorance of any method by which Rationalism can successfully compete with orthodox Christianity in awakening a dormant conscience or in suddenly revolutionising the habits of a lifetime."

In conclusion, if Philip of Bethsaida speaks to the believer, similarly and with like decisiveness does the action of Nathanael speak to those who know not the Lord; and with such are not the churches as well as the secularist halls filled? Lives there a doubter who is constrained by motives half as strong for rejecting Jesus and disputing His credentials as those which actuated Nathanael at that moment? With him was the earnest conviction of a lifetime of

thoughtful study, based on the teaching of writings he believed to be verbally inspired, to assure him that Christ would not come from Nazareth but from Bethlehem, not as a persecuted working-man evangelist, but as an emancipating prince. Had he, whilst pretending to seek for truth, looked down with contempt upon the enthusiasm of his friend, his opportunity would have passed. It was not so. He arose, bestirred himself, came—how much of the secret of salvation is wrapped up in that word "come"!—and *Jesus saw him coming*, and quick as He ever is to meet the awaking soul reaching after Him, rewards Nathanael with such a flood of God-given demonstration and conviction that from that moment his heart was filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and he entered into the believer's privilege: "Henceforth

thou shalt see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

That word of Royal invitation, "come," still rings through the world. His word remains pledged, "Him that cometh I will in nowise cast out." Mysteries, difficulties, of course there are; in a revelation coming from God their absence would be a stumbling-block, indeed: but nature is more charged with them even than revelation. "I have dissected many a body, and I never found a soul," argued a sceptical physiologist. "I have dissected many an eye, and I never found sight," replied his believing companion. It is, to say the least of it, no greater mystery that my spirit, trustingly lifted heavenward, shielded to the utmost of my ability from intervening hindrances, should be fed by the

living Christ: that He should grow up into it, become part of it, until I can say—"I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" than that the broad leaf of the garden vegetable lifted sunward should be fed by the sun's rays; that the sun should so grow up into it and become part of it, that the very sunlight could be chemically extracted from it in the form of carbon, and that it would be hardly unscientific to say "it lives, yet not it, but the sun liveth in it." The truest instincts of man will never be satisfied with anything short of this, though the constant raising of our ideal as we grow up into Him frequently conveys the impression to our minds that we are not progressing. The hollow emptiness of mere negation starves the soul of man. One of the best known writers on political economy on the Continent

has recently left the ranks of the Free-thinkers: when questioned, he replied, *N'avoir rien c'est trop peu* (to have *nothing*, it is too little); yes, to have nothing, when, in Christ, you might have all things, is too little indeed. It was too little for the sixteen infidel leaders of London, who in the last thirty years have turned to Christ and salvation (see important leaflet, "What becomes of the Infidel Leaders," by the Rev. C. J. Whitmore, 88, Caversham Road, N.W.); and though there is not necessarily a clearing away of every doubt and difficulty when you come to Jesus, the strain is removed. If you inspect the intricacies of the machinery of one of the great manufacturing firms, you will come to some parts inclosed in a locked box, and will be told that of this *the Master has the key;* so there are,

and ever will be enigmas connected with the wondrous dealings of God with man of which it must be said the *Master has the key*; but, when He *is* Master, He gives the witness of the Spirit to those who trust Him, and in the secret of His presence there is peace :—

"Ridge of the mountain wave, lower thy crest;
Wail of Euroclydon, be thou at rest!
Sorrow can never be, darkness must fly,
Where saith the God of God, PEACE, IT IS I."

IMPURITY.

II.

IMPURITY.

"I am full of the fury of the Lord."—JER. vi. 11.

'TIS well that the heavenly citizen should at times be "full of the fury of the Lord"; should be on fire with Divine indignation. He wrestles "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places," and the sound of his rebuke and warning must ofttimes be in proportion to the intensity of the peril. "Son of man," said the word of the Lord to Ezekiel, "if thou givest him not warning nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way

to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

It is in this spirit that the heavenly citizen is constrained to deal with that second malignant influence in the trinity of evil, to which allusion was made in the previous paper, namely, the sin of impurity. The storm of indignation which has burst upon the *Pall Mall Gazette* on account of its recent exposure of flagitious, all-sacrificing lust, has afforded to many minds an additional proof that it is characteristic of an age of peculiar self-indulgence to deprecate plain speaking about plain sins; to endure unblushingly the visible manifestation of

evil; and prudishly to hide the head when such evils are denounced from pulpit, press, or platform by their proper names. We must at once acknowledge that there are some godly, Christian people who deprecate the publication of the articles in question; but the immense majority of the violent abuse which has been showered upon the head of the revealer of the "apocalypse of evil" has come from the frivolous, the worldly, the self-pleasing, who have so exhausted their vocabulary in abuse of the *Pall Mall Gazette* that they appear not to have a curse to spare for the defilers of the temple of the Holy Ghost, the child torturers, the incarnate fiends who have perpetrated the abominations which the *Pall Mall Gazette* has exposed, or the unnatural, avaricious godlessness of parents who have

literally fulfilled the prophecy in Joel iii. 3: "They have sold a girl for wine that they may drink."

In the midst of notorious vices which are eating like a canker into the heart of modern society; with not a few of the leaders of so-called high life living openly in adultery; with some of the main thoroughfares of the Metropolis so blocked by troops of fashionable prostitutes that a man who desires not to be solicited must walk amidst the cabs and omnibuses in the streets; we are told that the articles in the *Pall Mall* are indecent, and we are treated to the amazing spectacle of a Government prosecution against those who have been endeavouring, though possibly blunderingly and erroneously, to check the evil, when notorious procuresses and wealthy child seducers, well

known to the police, are permitted to go on their way unmolested. It is a despicable deceit of civilization, it is an insult to right feeling and common sense, it is, moreover, nationally perilous, inasmuch as it courts the explanation that, in the opinion of the authorities, the interests of particular trades and the reputations of particular persons are of more importance than national morality in the aggregate and the sufferings of the wronged. It is not reassuring to observe in the leading society newspaper the remark that a "number of gentlemen are trembling and quaking in their shoes lest they should be implicated in the revelations." Such GENTLEMEN must necessarily detest the intrusive forth-teller of those things "done of them in secret," and their undistinguishing fury against the *Pall Mall Gazette* is accountable when we call

to mind the scandalous hushing up of the proceedings at Westminster against the wretched procuress, Mary Jeffries, in which men of exalted rank were directly implicated. (For their names see *The Sentinel* for June, 1885, published by Dyer, Paternoster Square.) We feel bound to express the opinion that these revelations, however nauseous, however shocking to the moral sense, must tend in the ultimate issue to moral improvement. It is undeniable that they have already accomplished directly the result of raising the age at which seduction is punishable by law, and have rendered it less easy for the would-be libertine to destroy. By the law of Moses, when leprosy in all its hideous defilement was full out upon the sufferer's body he was no longer ceremonially unclean, partly for the reason that in that stage the disease was less

contagious, partly in that the utter loathsomeness of the sight would of itself discourage contact. The same principle applies to the scathing exposure of moral leprosy in the articles in question. There are minds so foul, as all who have had remedial dealings with souls know well, that their prurient appetites will find some food even in the most sacred writings; but here the physical details are recorded with such sickening minuteness that they can hardly be imagined to do other than revolt even the most licentious, and the entire publication does not contain half the potentiality for inspiring prurience that may be found within the pages of many a sensational three-volume novel, the main object of which appears to be to gloss over sin with a veneer of sentiment, and to enlist the sympathy of the reader with, while pretending to con-

demn, breaches of the seventh commandment. In no one out of the whole catalogue of crimes laid bare by the *Pall Mall Gazette* does there lie hid so much suggestion of evil, as in the following sentences from the leading society journal, a paper to be found in the house of almost every condemner of the *Pall Mall.* Commenting upon an accusation recently made against an ex-Cabinet minister, it says, "As a man of fashion (he) ought to be superior to emotional weakness; from the deals of private conduct, which, as one might imagine, he proposes to himself, effusiveness or gush should be absent; while the pursuit of pleasure should be tempered by a discretion and astuteness which throw the glamour of intellectual ingenuity over the grossness of vice." What counsel can be imagined more deliberately immoral than this? Here

is vice varnished over with literary euphemism, spread broadcast into the family life of the nation with impunity by the editor of the society journal, whilst the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, for exposing and uttering a warning voice against gross breaches of the law, is not only smothered with invective, but has to take his place in the dock as a prisoner.

Nay, let us rather be thankful that the conspiracy of silence has been broken at last, that the fierce sunlight of exposure is beating in upon the mass of moral rottenness. When the Hon. Grantly Berkeley, looking back in his autobiography upon the events of a long and changeful life, attributes no small share of the vices and follies of earlier years to his never having heard in his life one brave outspoken sermon upon the text, "Thou

shalt not commit adultery," we may lay it down as an axiom that when society is ashamed to sin it will be time enough for those whose duty it is to endeavour to stem the torrent of evil in society to be ashamed to speak of sin. In the meantime, we thank God that He hath placed "watchmen upon the wall of Zion who shall never hold their peace day nor night;" men who, in the spirit of John the Baptist, the royal chaplain who rebuked a king at the cost of his head, will "constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake."

As we look back on the history of mankind, as we note the disastrous power of the lusts of the flesh to distort the strongest characters, to taint the lives of men and women, and to poison the springs of family life, we are compelled to admit that the

sexual impurity of our day is no sudden development, but an inheritance of evil deeply ingrained in human nature. Augustine is probably the originator of the theory that some fearful form of this sin necessitated the deluge; the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the extirpation of the Canaanites, were the direct consequences of sexual vice; the traditions of heathen mythology, the still existing frescoes on the walls of Pompeii, and the locked room filled with obscene statuary in the museum at Naples, indicate the extent of the evil amongst the ancient civilizations. The worship of Baal and Ashtaroth, the deification of the male and female principles in nature, patronised by Jezebel, the Zidonian queen, was accompanied with the wildest sensual licence, which Elijah the Tishbite was raised

up by Jehovah to rebuke; and it was the same sexual vice, and again in a king's palace, that Elijah's great antitype, John the Baptist, so fearlessly challenged and rebuked. What has been termed the "self-repeating action of humanity" has carried on the inheritance to our own time, and we find ourselves confronted with a grievous manifestation of the old evil. Recent revelations have sufficed to convince many that impurity, not only amongst haunts of squalor, misery, and vice, but in the highest societies also, is assuming the proportions of a pestilence, and threatening the mainsprings of national life. Statistics are obtainable in ghastly array, proving beyond question that many of the general conditions of society prevailing in Imperial Rome, in the early days of Christianity, are being reproduced in Christian

England at the present time. This being so it is in the light of patriotism that it behoves us first to touch this cancer of modern life, for the truth is unalterable that "righteousness exalteth a nation," and that national demoralisation is followed by decrepitude and decay. All vain-glorious boasting about *prestige* abroad, and spirited foreign policies is but sounding brass when the life-blood of a nation is being sapped by voluptuous corruption. "Thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye put away the accursed thing from amongst you" (Josh. vii. 13). What blindness, then, can be imagined more suicidal than the conspiracy of silence which would cast a veil over evil influences destructive to the welfare of a people If it be true that there are eighty thousand fallen women plying their terrible trade in London

alone, and that in other centres of population the proportion is maintained; if it be true that nameless vices and hideous forms of sin (Rom. i. 26, 27) are increasing amongst us; if it be true that had the Jeffries case not been hushed up, the revelation of the names of those implicated would have shaken society to its foundation; inasmuch as the purity of a nation in the aggregate will never rise higher than the purity of its women, it is the bounden duty of every patriot and philanthropist to direct his attention to, and deal courageously with, this hindrance to national well-being. Mirabeau, when asked at what age he would commence the education of a boy, is reported to have replied, "I would begin twenty years before he is born, by educating his mother." The inexorable law of heredity convinces us of

the disastrous effect upon national life of the converse of this benevolent proposition; twenty years before they are born are we demoralising the coming generation by suffering the contagion of degrading vice to infect their potential mothers. It is time then that these questions lying at the root of national well-being should be pressed upon the attention of our would-be legislators. We are hearing enough, perhaps more than enough, of the various items of the programmes of the contending political aspirants for power, while a condition of shameless vice which lowers the whole moral tone of the nation by enslaving the will to the appetite, demoralising youth and degrading womanhood, is, presumably because it does not supply material for party warfare, passed over in silence.

Speaking from the lowest platform first, it is, I am convinced, from an elevated tone of public feeling alone that improvement may be anticipated. It behoves society, in mere self-defence, if from no higher motive, to bestir itself and extrude from the domestic circle polluting influences. Surely there are, amidst the highborn and the influential, a goodly number "who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and who have not kissed him" The peril of the times calls for heroic efforts. Let them combine to raise the whole standard of social ethics, in conversation, in qualification for friendship, in occupation, in recreation. Let them by mutual agreement endeavour to abolish the vile social code whereby one standard of morals is required of a woman and another of a man. Let them resolutely exclude from their houses

men, whatever be their credentials of birth or wealth, who are known to be living in open sin. Let them shake themselves free from "the devil's cobwebs of guilty custom and guilty acquiescence," and believe that the purity and happiness of their daughters are of more value than coronets or fortunes. They will have difficulties to contend with, doubtless, but inasmuch as their influence will spread downwards and leaven the masses beneath them, they will justify the existence of a ruling class and earn the gratitude of thousands. They are, perhaps, hardly aware of the extent to which the vices of the poorer classes are an echo of the manner of life of those above them in the social scale. Selfish luxury, ostentation, fortune and title-hunting, stripped of the veneer of social refinement, are apt to reappear in the hideous

forms of vice common amongst those who compose the dangerous and criminal classes. If it may be said with truth of some of the marriages in high life, too frequently concluded by the Divorce Court, that "they have sold a girl for a fortune or a coronet," we have no right to be surprised if the contagion spreads downwards from Belgravia to Whitechapel; and if the refined and legalised form of prostitution which legitimatises the aristocratic bargain by the ceremony of marriage, repeats itself in the brutal insensibility to parental duty revealed by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and foretold by the prophet Joel in the words already quoted, "They have sold a girl for wine, that they may drink."

It would, moreover, greatly tend to mitigate the existing condition of things if there were associations of men in connection with

the White Cross Army or some other branch of the Purity Crusade, chivalrously pledged, even if from motives of compassion and patriotism alone, to protect the honour and further the interests of women and girls. If men of culture and standing in society would combine to mete out the same penalty to one who deliberately robs a woman of her purity that they would inflict upon one who cheats at cards or fails to settle his racing debts, the effect would be immediate and salutary. Lives there a criminal on this earth more despicable, more worthy of the punishment of social ostracism, than the man who, by false pretences, by flattery, by stimulating the impulses of curiosity or affection deliberately robs a girl of her virtue? In all the bitter meaning of the term he has been the ruin of her; he has destroyed her

as effectually and as irrevocably as one who for a caprice might burn a priceless diamond into a chip of carbon, from which condition all the chemists in the world can never recover it. Himself escaping without loss or damage, he has condemned her to a life of shame and degradation, to a condition of bondage more bitter than negro slavery, to a hopeless life naturally terminating in a despairing death, embittered by loathsome disease; unless, indeed, the blistering anguish of an unsleeping conscience, ever reminding her of happier years, drives his victim into a suicide's grave, and a plunge into the dark waters tells of one more—

> "Mad from life's history,
> Glad to death's mystery
> Swift to be hurled,
> Anywhere, anywhere,
> Out of the world."

That the deliberate author of a ruin such as this,—and there are hundreds who boast of the number of the ruins they have accomplished,—should be received into the society of the just, the upright, and the pure, should merit the confidence of his fellow-men, and be entrusted with the responsibility of a legislator, either hereditary or elected; should mingle freely with the wives and daughters of others, is a paradox, an absurdity, and a crime.

Again, it is to such associations of reformers of society that we must look for the formation of vigorous vigilance committees to watch the general treatment of women; to interest themselves in removing the disabilities of women; to protest against, and, where possible, remove that terrible incentive to vice, the utterly inadequate

remuneration for women's labour; to watch narrowly the public-houses and gin-palaces of the Metropolis and other large towns, vast numbers of which are dens of infamy and brothels in disguise. It will be their duty also to leaven public opinion and diffuse information—statistical, medical, and legal. By the means of frequent lectures, such as Mr. Henry Varley's grand "Sermon to Men," the masses should be assured that this form of vice is as much a sin against human order as against Divine law, and that the natural penalties attaching to it are peculiar, frightful, and hereditary. The wretched sophistry of the argument, not unfrequently urged by young men, that health cannot be maintained without sexual sin, must be exposed and refuted, and any boasted medical authority met by the public statement of

Sir James Paget, that the continent man is in every case the strong man, and that he would as readily recommend a patient to steal as to commit the sin of fornication. The detestable philosophy of selfishness which underlies the invariable excuse that the committal of this sin does not involve wronging the woman if only she be already fallen, must be constantly combated. As well might it be urged that no blame would attach to one who, seeing a woman sinking in the mud of a tidal river, thrust her, for his own gratification, one foot deeper down into the slough, and exculpated himself upon the plea that he was not the first to cast her in. Nay, though the necessary retribution may not be so terrible as that which awaits her first seducer, every separate sharer in her gradually increasing degradation is her

moral murderer, and guilty before his God. Further, when once the amount of impurity that shelters itself under the trashy inflammatory fiction that pours from the modern printing press has been recognised, it is obvious that any attempt on the part of society for self-purification will include a searching censorship over books. If you would shrink from subjecting your daughter to the companionship of a man of coarse mind, wisdom would suggest the same compunction at subjecting her mind to the foul saturation of some of the popular novels of the day, and you will choose her books with as much discrimination as you would choose her friends. We are not prepared to say that all forms of literary fiction are necessarily demoralising. The method called fiction is not unknown to the Bible, as may

be seen in Jotham's parable of the trees (Judg. ix.), and from the allegories of the New Testament. The harmless fairy-tales of childhood have sometimes started into activity the wondering faculty which, stimulating the instinct for reaching into the unknown, have led at last into the awakened "faith faculty," whose sole satisfier is God. Works like the novels of Miss Yonge, and authors of a similar stamp, have exercised a refining influence upon many minds, and, without doubt, social wrongs and class injustices, and even national sins, have at times been more successfully attacked under the guise of clever fiction than by direct assault. Charles Reade's "Never too Late to Mend," brought about a distinct mitigation of prison discipline; his "Hard Cash" focussed the attention of thoughtful men

upon the then existing iniquities of private lunatic asylums, and brought indirectly relief to hundreds; whilst other writings of his have caused many to consider seriously whether the relations between employer and employed were righteously adjusted, and prepared the minds of men for salutary changes which have since been effected. But it is impossible to speak too emphatically of the terrible danger to intellect, heart, and spirit of the bad book. Of such an one did an eminent Christian man speak but recently when he declared that for a quarter of an hour, when he was a boy, a book was placed in his hand, the evil impression of which had never left him, though his hair was grey in the service of Christ. In such books there are serpent's fangs. We read of one who in India took down from his shelf

a book, feeling at the same moment a slight prick in his finger which he attributed to a pin; symptoms of poisoning rapidly appeared, and he was shortly a corpse. A deadly serpent had been concealed amongst the books, and had struck its fangs into his finger. There are books that sting to the death. Many a ruined life and broken heart has owed its destruction to literary poison. Courvoisier attributed his assassination of Lord William Russell to a state of morbid sympathy with crime induced by reading the popular romance "Jack Sheppard." And many a girl has fallen an easy prey to the seducer from inflated notions, sentimental ideas, and poisonous thoughts, instilled into her mind through novels, feuilletons, and suggestive poetry. Thus far, at least, may we fairly look to the instinct of self-protec-

tion in society to check corruption, resist injustice, spread information, and generally to elevate the moral standard.

It is now meet that we should consider, in conclusion, the characteristic duty of the Christian as such, the citizen of heaven, towards the prevailing impurity. Impurity is a heart-sin, of which misery and corruption are the fruits. "Out of the heart," proclaimed He who knew what was in man, "proceed adulteries." This being so, the labours of philanthropists and reformers of society, the diffusion of knowledge, the censorship of literature, and removal of the disabilities of women, though they will prevail to ameliorate the suffering fever of the symptoms, must be powerless to touch the root of the disease. It can only be cured by One who has the will and the power

to put a new heart into man. There is a remedy, perfect and unfailing, for the hereditary and acquired poison of sin-stained human nature, and this remedy is the cleansing, healing, keeping power of the Risen, ever-present, Christ, who has pledged His word, and heaven and earth shall sooner pass away than that word be broken—"Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." The great dramatic incident of the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal is the prophecy and the prototype of the power of the Spirit of Jesus to conquer in man the lust of the flesh. Baal, the lust god, the deified male principle in nature, is conquered by the fire from heaven, and the shattered altar of Jehovah rebuilt (1 Kings xviii.). Thus have, again and again, the whole licentious crew

of passions that have ministered to the Baal within been put to death, and the shattered bodily temple been cleansed and rebuilt by the Jehovah-Jesus, when the link of faith and trust has been forged between His power and a sinner's weakness. The Gospel accepted; the good news, that God was in Christ "reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses," believed; the marvellous truth, that not only has the Father forgiven our sins, but, in order that He might win our love, robed Himself in a human soul and body, and now calls us to a close personal union with Himself, an interpenetration of life, apprehended: this knowledge is so soul-filling that it quickens, inspires, purifies, and saves.

This Gospel the Christian must first live and then proclaim. Before he can effectively

go forth and wield the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to him and say, "We beseech you in Christ's stead ye be reconciled to God," he must shine. The glorious ideal form which from Bethlehem to Calvary manifested God on earth, as it was borne back into the spirit world, spoke the command, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me." The question is, are we believers thus shining as lights in the world? If not, whatever our words, we are hindering the Gospel we profess to proclaim. "Your words terrify me," said a courtier of France to Massillon, "but your life reassures me." Let us see to it that the inconsistency of our life reassures no half-terrified libertine. St. Paul witnessed to the necessity for watchfulness on the part of the child of God when he exhorted his young Bishop

Timothy in the words "keep THYSELF pure." Yes, the heavenly citizen, in an atmosphere stifled with corruption, must keep *himself* pure; he cannot stand before the enemies of Christ and humanity if the "accursed thing" is in his own heart; he must resolutely and persistently search for any trace of unmortified evil tendency, any unslain prophet of Baal, and crucify it. When the old line-of-battle ship *Dougal*, lying on Portsmouth mud, was overhauled after being fifteen years out of commission, they found in her a live shell with fuse attached, which, under the pressure of a child's foot or the gnawing of a rat's tooth, might at any moment during those fifteen years have blown her to atoms. A citizen of heaven cannot afford thus to have live shells within; his safety is in abiding constantly and

consciously in Christ. "I am the Lord's" (Isa. xliv. 5) will be his perpetual protection; to Satan he will say, "Touch not the Lord's anointed"; to human tempters he will say, "I am not my own, how can I do this great sin against my God?" To his Heavenly Father he will say, "I am Thine, save me" (Ps. cxix.). There is a tiny aquatic insect that possesses the capacity for gathering round itself a bubble of atmospheric air, encased in which, as in a crystal vesture, it can plunge into the foulest water and traverse the muddiest bottom unsoiled: it is a parable of the believer abiding in Jesus. Hidden in Him, with every thought brought into captivity to Him, living in His presence, the Christian is safe, and he can walk unharmed through the world's wickedness. Moreover, thus

abiding, living in touch with the Lord, his words of warning will have power. If his is a pulpit ministry, he will fearlessly denounce sins of the flesh, leaving consequences to God. The fact that society tolerates and condones what it would not have tolerated in the days when the consort of our Queen was living, is partly to be accounted for by the silence of the pulpit; the servant of the Lord must seek for the Elijah spirit, which can calmly confront an Ahab with "I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house"; the John Baptist spirit with its Nazarite separateness and daring truthfulness, which can withstand a Herod with the verdict, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." Again, though for this he will find it expedient to address the two sexes separately, he will speak with

outspoken lucidity to young men with regard to secret sin. There are sins, secret as the grave, which crush, blight, ruin the Divine image in man, and tens of thousands never hear a warning word against them. There stood one, on the southern peak of the Isle of Skye, and watched the eagles as they soared in the deep blue far above his head. Suddenly he saw one hesitate, tremble, begin to descend, close its wings and fall, dead, a mere mass of feathers to the ground. Out from beneath its body crept a tiny weasel which it had captured as its prey, and holding which in its talons it had soared aloft. True to its nature, the weasel had writhed from the eagle's talons, and fixing its teeth into his life's blood, had brought him to the ground. Thus has many a noble young life full of promise been

crushed and ruined by a secret sin; lightly treated, little feared, it has sucked the life-blood of the soul.

Lastly, the heavenly citizen will ever have the "mind of Christ" towards the fallen; filled with the yearning compassion of his Master, who never shrank from leper's touch or harlot's tear, he will look upon none as fallen too far for the glorious remedy to reach. The Spirit of God never ceases to strive even with the most polluted and sin-stained, and the Lord has never ceased to love His sheep that have wandered from Him. Not otherwise was it with one poor outcast who was found dead in a wretched garret, friendless and starved—

> "Oh, it was pitiful,
> Near a whole city full,—
> Friend she had none;"

but in her own handwriting, blotted with her tears, was found that pathetic wail, since reprinted by the thousand, of which these stanzas are a part:—

"Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell,
Fell like the snowflakes from heaven to hell;
Fell to be trampled as filth on the street,
Fell to be scoffed, to be spit on and beat—
Pleading—cursing—dreading to die,

"Selling my soul to whoever would buy;
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living and fearing the dead.
Merciful God, have I fallen so low?
And yet I was once like the beautiful snow."

Would not He whose name is Love "put these tears into His bottle," and "note these things in His book"? Would He not read into these words the prayer, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow"? It will be the duty of the heavenly citizen to find this chord in the sad hearts, set it vibrating

once more, and satisfy it with the glorious message of the Gospel: "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

INTEMPERANCE.

III.

INTEMPERANCE.

"The twelfth an amethyst."—REV. xxi. 20.

IT is an old story, but it is not more old than true, that a vast proportion of the disgraceful libertinism referred to in the last paper, is directly propagated and mainly supported by the third destructive influence in the trinity of evil of which we would speak to-day, namely, Intemperance. It is not too much to say that without the treacherous, stimulating, all-destroying power of strong drink, one-half of the horrors depicted in the *Pall Mall* revelations would be impossible.

To peruse that shocking catalogue of vice, and mark each occurrence of an allusion to strong drink, is a painful but suggestive study; again and again do you come upon some such saying as "if possible the girl is made drunk."

A leading judge of the Divorce Court —that standing witness of the inability of birth, education, and refinement to remedy the evils of the human heart—has declared that nine out of ten of the cases upon which he has to adjudicate owe their origin to strong drink. The police, whose activity in the detection of crime is ever in exact proportion to the urgency of their orders from head-quarters, could tell you, if they chose, of accursed dens of infamy, where tender boys and girls are initiated into the veritable mysteries of Satan;

where, primed with ardent spirits, their young hearts are seared as with a hot iron, and they are drawn irresistibly into the vortex of debasement and ruin, to swell the dangerous classes of the community. The columns of the daily papers, the constant utterances of judges, magistrates, coroners, and superintendents of lunatic asylums, accumulate evidence that the most direct stimulus to crime, lunacy, and pauperism is strong drink. Drinking, says the *Times* (April, 1881), baffles us, confounds us, shames us, and mocks us at every point. It outwits alike the teacher, the man of business, the patriot, and the legislator. Every other institution flounders in hopeless difficulties, the public-house holds its triumphant course. The administrators of public and private charity are told that

alms and oblations go with rates, doles, and pensions to the all-absorbing bar of the public-house, but the *worst* remains. Not a year passes in either town or village without some unexpected and hideous scandal, the outcome of habitual indulgence, often small and innocent in its origin. Some poor creature, long and deservedly high in the respect, perhaps reverence, of the neighbourhood, makes a sudden shipwreck of character. Under the accumulating influence of alcohol, aggravated, perhaps, by other still more powerful, still more treacherous agencies, the honest man turns knave, the respectable man suddenly loses principle and self-respect, the wise man is utterly foolish, the rigidly moral man forgets his mask and his code, and takes a plunge into libertinism. It then turns out—what possibly some

have suspected—*that drink is at the bottom of it.* Yes, drink is at the bottom of it. The fiendish epidemic, prolific of suffering, suicide, murder, which is mocking every effort of every philanthropist for the well-being of the people, is at the bottom of it. Utterly saddening and disgusting are the statistics of our national shame, which have been recapitulated a thousand times. Equally harassing are the details of desolate homes and broken hearts which come under the individual notice of those ministerially engaged in the work of seeking and saving the wandering. The land is groaning under a heavy burden. Some idea of the pecuniary tax may be gained from the fact that the whole rental of the houses and of the land in this country, added to the amount spent in household coal, hardly

reaches the total spent annually in intoxicating drinks.

The extent to which intemperance is pauperising the working classes may be imagined from the example of a ship-building town in the north of England, where £12,000 was paid weekly in wages, £4,000 of which found its way at once into the various drink-shops.* In Ireland the sum annually spent in drink exceeds by two millions and a quarter the whole rental of the island. And that the producing power of the nation is materially diminished by our drinking habits has been painfully ad-

* The accuracy of these statistics, originally appearing in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, was questioned in Parliament, and the sum mentioned stated to be exaggerated, but the questioner was compelled to admit that a large proportion of the weekly £12,000 was spent in drink

vertised by the English consuls of the United States, who, in a report forwarded to their own Government, have remarked that by reason of drunkenness on Saturday and Monday, the productive power of England has diminished by one-sixth in comparison with other countries. (See "Science Temperance Text-Book," by Dr. F. R. Lees, 337, Strand. Perhaps the most exhaustive compendium of Temperance information ever published.) But this is not all. If pauperism be a symptom of national decrepitude,—and the author of the "Early Days of Christianity" declares that every age in its decline has exhibited the spectacle of selfish luxury side by side with abject poverty,—it behoves our national reformers to contemplate the following facts. We have in England a vast hereditary pauper

class which costs the State ten millions annually, and it is estimated that some ten millions more are annually expended in private charity, added to which the crime which springs mainly from that class involves an expenditure of another five millions, a sum equal in the aggregate to more than the interest of the National Debt, or about the cost of the army and navy. But, as has been shown by Dr. Baron ("Le Pauperisme: ses Causes, ses Remèdes") of all the causes of pauperism the most potent—more potent probably than all other causes put together—is drink, as well in France as elsewhere. In Geneva, it has been distinctly proved that of one hundred cases of family destitution relieved by the local *bureau de bienfaisance*, eighty are traceable to the drunkenness of the father. In France

there is one cabaret for every twenty-nine electors, equal to one for every 105 inhabitants. Judged by this test, the most drunken departments are the Nord, where there is a cabaret for every eleven electors, and the Pas-de-Calais, where there is one for every fourteen. In La Charente, Le Gers, and Le Vaucluse, the proportion varies from one in fifty to one in sixty-nine. In the regions where cabarets most abound, pauperism is most rife. In the north relief is granted by the *bureaux de bienfaisance* to one inhabitant in twelve; in the south-west to one in forty-seven. Comparing the facilities for drinking with the facilities for thrift, we find that while in the Republic at large there is one public-house for 105 people, there is one savings bank for every 28,500, and one benefit society for every 5,400. M. C. Play, the author of

"Les Ouvriers des Deux Mondes," estimates the average expenditure in drink and gambling (mostly in drink) of a superior French workman at £28 sterling a year. The same causes that make for pauperism make also for crime. In the north, there is one criminal (*condamné*) to 269 inhabitants; in the south-west, one to 626. Moreover, drink as it were burns the candle at both ends; an encouragement to expense, it is almost fatal to thrift. In France, as in our own country, it has been noted that when the drink bill reaches its highest point under the influence of prosperity in trade and higher wages, extravagance of all kinds increases, and the savings of the people are diminished. For this reason, and for some others which he mentions, Dr. Baron altogether disbelieves the hypothesis of want

being a cause of drunkenness; and contends that *indigence, criminality, and improvidence are in direct proportion to the number of public-houses.* Yet this is the only point on which he does not seem to have the courage of his opinion. He proposes no repressive or regulative laws as touching public-houses, but hopes much from the spread of education and the growth of better ideas. But, as the example of Switzerland abundantly proves, popular education, unless accompanied by some material check on facilities for drinking, is not by itself sufficient to keep a people sober. The Swiss have long been both one of the freest and one of the best instructed of nations; nevertheless the Federal Council have just been constrained to devise an elaborate scheme for making head against drunkenness, by

reducing the number of drink-shops. (See *Spectator*, July, 1884.)

We read of a scheme for draining the Zuyder Zee, whereby fifty million hectares of land, equal to three whole provinces, would be gained. Truly if some European scheme could be devised for draining the Zuyder Zee of Drink, the increase in the happiness, morality, and commercial prosperity of the nations would be immeasurable.

When a case has been as thoroughly proved before every tribunal as the impeachment against intemperance; when the *Times* declares that "there is not a vice, or a disease, or a disorder, or a calamity of any kind that has not its frequent rise in the public-house; it degrades, ruins, and brutalises a large fraction of the British

people;" when it is manifest that drunkenness deteriorates the race, binds the will, clouds the intellect, enslaves humanity; we turn naturally to the Government of the country, imagining that policy and necessity would induce those in authority to take immediate steps to alleviate the prevailing distress. But we turn in vain. A contemplation of proceedings in Parliament from 1880, when Sir Wilfrid Lawson passed for the first time his Local Option resolution, to 1884, constrains us to inquire what there is about the atmosphere of the House of Commons that appears to paralyse conscience, disorganise moral instincts, and blunt the faculties whereby men discern between right and wrong. We are told in trumpet tones that drunkenness produces the "combined evils of war, pestilence,

and famine;" that the main object of the conscientious legislator should be to "make it easy for people to do right and difficult for them to do wrong." And behold, when the utterers of these magnificent truisms have been enthusiastically placed in power, partly upon the reputation of such enlightened sentiments, we have to witness in four years twenty-six Bills, aimed at intemperance, by obstruction, indifference, or "talking out," permitted to fail. It is true that we have to be thankful for some very partial measures of Sunday Closing, and that last year one small suggestion became law, which will not be without its good effect; and for that we are indebted to the House of Lords, namely, the Bill for preventing the payment of wages in public-houses. But the action of the Government of the

country during the last four years with regard to Temperance reform, has kindled in the hearts of thousands of Temperance voters a sense of wrong too deeply seated to be easily removed by fresh promises. It is true, we ought to have known better than to lean too hard upon a broken reed for legislative morality in England is a puzzle and a paradox. The English have apparently a national obliquity of vision as to the moral proportions of things; we imprison, for example, with unflinching severity, an apprentice who, under the pressure of sudden temptation, appropriates the contents of his master's cash-box; while without a qualm we starve the district of Malwa, in India, by growing 300,000 acres of land with opium instead of corn, and for the sake of a few millions sterling

to the revenue, curse and destroy the Chinese by importing amongst them, against their will, 80,000 chests of poison annually. Again, in the chaste dignity of our Pharisaism, we institute a virulent Government prosecution against those who have been exposing amongst us some of the greatest abominations of modern times, while the "Minotaurs," the brothel-keepers, the destroyers of children, though known to the police, are unmolested. Our national modesty, moreover, requires that the costume of our ballet dancers shall be regulated by all the wisdom of the Lord Chamberlain's office, while Regent Street is permitted to be disgraced nightly by an exhibition of shameless public profligacy that would not be tolerated for a single day in any other capital in Europe. This gnat-straining and

camel-swallowing, which is characteristic of our nationality, become positively grotesque when on Sunday morning, as the clock strikes eleven, you see the policeman ordering off the harmless shoeblack, the working man's valet; and this gnat being strained out, for the rest of the day he is enabled to swallow comfortably the vast mass of Sunday trading and labour in gin-palaces, railways, omnibuses, tramcars, West End clubs, and tobacconists' shops. We confess, again, to a positive shock to the moral sense when we read in our daily paper of lads fined before the magistrate for playing some game of chance in the street, and upon turning over our newspaper we see glowing accounts of the gambling transactions of the aristocracy in a well known West End racing club, and the betting

upon the next horse-race chronicled in the same type as the last news from Bulgaria, or the meeting of a Cabinet Council. It is not, therefore, a matter for surprise that this national camel-swallowing and gnat-straining has been a prominent feature in the rise, production, and application of the 470 Acts upon the statute-book professing to regulate the curse of England, its great licensed liquor-traffic. But there is a hope from the very intensity of the evil. The disasters arising from drink are upon a scale so vast that it will not be possible to see

> "Truth for ever on the scaffold, wrong for ever on the throne."

The hope of the future, speaking from the national, the patriotic standpoint, is in the working men of England, into whose hands

every day the future destinies of this country are being more and more placed. When once they have clearly perceived that a sober working class could in five years carry every measure of reform they desire; when once their eyes are open to the fact that the immense public-house system of the country, the deriving of vast sums for the revenue from the bitter suffering and grinding pauperism of the people, is a terrible offence against their class, the present elaborate system of society-petted and Government-sanctioned, temptation is doomed. In spite of the three hundred millions invested in England's curse, in spite of the revenue derived, in spite of its roots deep down in the national life; when once the working classes are face to face with their enemy; when, looking at

the accumulated evils pressing upon them, pointing to the shivering, beaten children, sworn at, driven on the streets, familiarised with obscenity and blasphemy from their infancy, they turn upon the liquor-traffic and say, "This is your work," it is doomed; for

"There is a wound, a grievous wound, that rankles in the heart
Of those, who, from their homes and all, by tyrant hands must part;
It never heals, but rankles on, like wind, now calm, then storm,
Till, gath'ring strength, tornado-like, it bursts—then comes REFORM!"

Let those in whose votes lies the potentiality of every measure of reform once be made to realize the truth that by the "tyrant hands" of strong drink alone 600,000 families in the United Kingdom never know

the meaning of that one word of sweetest cadence, Home, and the tornado that will burst upon the great state-supported system of temptation will assuredly reform it off the face of the land.

In the meantime, without "Local Option" the people are voiceless, and until some sweeping measure of reform is wrung from a reluctant Government by irresistible pressure, the main stress will continue to be laid upon private unselfish philanthropic reform in the direction of moral suasion, counter attractions to the public-house, the formation of public opinion by the diffusion of information, the organization of Temperance Societies and Bands of Hope, the enforcing by means of vigilance committees or otherwise existing legislation, as to serving drink to intoxicated persons and young children, and at illegal

hours, and the general purification of the moral atmosphere.

But it is obvious that the deepest responsibility of all rests upon the heavenly citizen; that man whose test of being "in Christ before God" is, that he shall be in all crises of oppression, tyranny, and temptation, "for Christ before men." Upon him, above all, has the commission been laid, "Take up the stumbling-block out of the way of My people" (Isa. lvii. 14). To shrink from it is disloyalty, to falter is to sin, to resist selfishly, indifferently, is to court the condemnation, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of these, ye did it not unto Me." What then can he do? I think I see his duty set in jewels in the words at the head of this paper, "*The twelfth an amethyst.*" Students of the word of God will recognise the

sentence as part of the singularly beautiful description of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which he saw coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. It is the yearning gaze of faith, reaching right on to the splendour of the fadeless morning. "And he carried me away in the Spirit," says the Apostle, "to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." It is a calm source of consolation and encouragement to the true-hearted soldier of Jesus Christ. It is like the sweet thoughts of home which come flooding through the gates of a quickened memory to the mind of some soldier dying amid the din and smoke of the battle-field, causing him to forget his surroundings, and babble of home and green

fields. To the heart of God's workers, wounded to the core by being brought constantly into contact with life under its most hideous aspect, distress in its greatest intensity, death in its most repulsive forms, it is like a refreshing shower upon parched earth to read the unchangeable promise: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

This vision of the Church in heaven is obviously granted to the Church on earth for a double purpose. *First*, that we may never despair at the contemplation of our world, darkened with sorrow and laid waste with sin, for the final overthrow of all evil is here distinctly manifested as a truth of pure

revelation; and, *secondly*, that we may be stimulated so to labour and to pray that we may accelerate the glorious event, "looking for and *hasting*," not hasting unto, but "*hasting*," the Day of God.

It would be beside our purpose to consider the whole of this glorious vision of the New Jerusalem; the language which foretells it is mystic, symbolical, supernatural. But I desire to emphasize one thought from the inspired imagery, and I would ask all to think it out for themselves. The city whose streets are gold, and which needs not the light of the sun or of the moon, is supported upon twelve foundations, which are twelve precious stones. Precious stones have ever possessed in the legendary lore of all nations a symbolical importance. There is not one of these precious stones upon which the

Heavenly City rests that is not obviously intended to represent symbolically the final victory of one of those regenerating principles now operating in antagonism to evil. I humbly submit that I am in no sense overstraining an analogy, nor grasping at a fanciful interpretation, but literally accepting the teaching of the word of God by concentrating your attention upon *one* of these precious stones, the twelfth and the *last* of the foundations of the Heavenly City, and inquiring into its nature and teaching. It says: "The twelfth an amethyst." An amethyst—and why *an amethyst?* Put aside for the moment the unbroken chain of legend which has clustered round the amethyst, and which corroborates the application I would make; treat it from the matter-of-fact, scholarly point of view; put imagination on one side,

and translate the word *amethyst* literally ; it can bear but one interpretation—a combination of two familiar Greek words—"*a*," not, and "*methustos*," a user of strong drink. Its literal common-sense translation is, "ABSTINENCE FROM STRONG DRINK."

"The twelfth an amethyst:" The twelfth regenerating principle upon which, as upon a foundation-stone, the New Jerusalem alone can stand, "Abstinence from strong drink!!" What a marvellous prophecy have we here. Uttered 1,200 years before the pernicious art of distillation was invented, it points distinctly to the peculiar and special peril of these latter days and its remedy. How clearly and manifestly *true*, if in the New Jerusalem there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; how manifest to the

meanest comprehension that one of its foundation-stones *must* be the victory over that ever-wasting destruction which, accompanied by the sigh of hopelessness and the groan of pain, is brutalising, ruining, pauperising, and maddening thousands for whom Christ died, and for whom Christ's followers are in a large measure responsible!

To be privileged, then, to build this twelfth foundation-stone by the personal practice and quiet advocacy of abstinence from strong drink, is within the scope of the humblest heavenly citizen. The method possesses the advantage of exhibiting a constructive, not a destructive, activity; it savours rather of overcoming evil with good than of pulling down by aggressive warfare the strongholds of Satan; it quietly purifies the social atmosphere by breathing into it a healthy

element, as the Eucalyptus gum-tree planted in the malarious marshes of the Roman Campagna neutralises the fever poison by its life-giving exhalations. It would be easy to fill this paper with examples of the strengthening, reforming power, in every kind of society, of the silent witness of total abstinence on the part of those who never made a platform speech in their lives, and could not sustain an argument as to the pathology of intemperance. Let it be an encouragement to the thousands who, in the face of opposition, ridicule, and often discouragement, have been quietly bearing this witness. I pray them to accept the assurance that although they may not possess the gift of oratory or the opportunity for evangelising the masses, they have none the less been silently establishing the twelfth foundation-stone of the mystic fabric,

and "shining" (Phil. ii. 15) "as lights in the world," with the soft lustre of an amethyst, for God. If we had the power to penetrate into the mysteries of the Master Builder's manufactory, we should estimate at their proper value the unnoticed, undistinguished builders of the kingdom of heaven quietly living and dying to save a world that knows not how much its owes them. The extent to which these persuasive preachers of the best of all sermons—a life, prevail to change currents of thought and work miracles in the characters of men, is suggested in the following beautiful extract from a sermon by the Rev. J. C. Street, of Belfast :—

"The pages of human history are very delusive. Not as yet have historians sufficiently grasped the fundamental thought that the world wants to know about the

people, and is not so much concerned about kings and rulers, and the movements of armies, and the intrigues of courts. Enough if the names of kings and princes are recorded, unless they have something to distinguish them other than their rank and title. And camps and courts, with their excesses and frivolities, might just be left out of the record, and no good thing would be missed in consequence. But what we do want to find, written in glowing records, is this—who have been the real doers of the world? who have taught new truths? who have lived lustrous lives? who have soothed human suffering? who have wrestled bravely with individual and national sin? who have saved multitudes from falling, strengthened the feeble knees, upheld the sinking arms, put courage into faint hearts, driven away famine, disease,

crime, and immorality? who have been co-workers with God in aiding the world in its effort after holiness? To find these, any of them, you will need to look most scrutinisingly. Many of the illustrious souls you will never discover. They have lived, worked died, and their very names are buried. But known or unknown, these are the true apostles, the true representatives of God—the brethren and sisters of Jesus, the priests of humanity."

Thank God that amongst the ranks of total abstainers and humble members of the Blue Ribbon Gospel Temperance societies there are hundreds of such priests of humanity—they judge no man, but with Rom. xiv. 21 for their text, with the love of Christ and humanity in their hearts, they quietly pursue their way, and the wonderful

change of front in all ranks of society, amongst clergymen, doctors, lawyers, statesmen, is to be attributed more to the influence of the thousands of abstainers than to the arguments and statistics of reformers. "I cannot help thinking," said Mr. Justice Hawkins at a crimeless assize at Lincoln, "that a great deal of the happy condition of the people here must be due to abstinence from strong drink." And the close correspondence between abstinence and national prosperity may be implied from the significant fact that when in 1884 the loss to the Excise from a diminution in drinking amounted to two millions and a half, additional deposits to the amount of £2,400,000 were made during the same period in the Post Office Savings Bank.

Who, then will become an amethyst for

God? If you are weak, you will be wise to become one for your own sake; if you are strong, you will be still wiser to become one for the sake of the weak. It is a privilege, not a command, an expedient to meet a present distress, not an addition to the Decalogue. The brazen serpent had proved itself to be a gift of God, to be therapeutically worth more than all the doctors in Israel, but Hezekiah "did right in the sight of the Lord" when he destroyed it, seeing it had become a national danger. It is an unwritten law in God's court of equity that it is not always right for a free and intelligent being to do that which it is within his right and his power to do. David had both the right and the power to drink the water won for him at the cost of blood from the well of Bethlehem; had he done so he

would have forfeited his identity with his soldiers by availing himself of an indulgence no other man could share, and which, moreover, had been procured at the cost of blood. Jesus had both the right and the power to turn stones into bread in the wilderness; had He done so He would have forfeited His complete identity with His brethren in humanity by availing Himself of a method of sustenance beyond their reach. He had both the right and the power to deaden the pangs of crucifixion by the use of the anodyne of alcohol and mandragora offered to Him. He used His liberty in refusing, that He might have fellowship with humanity in suffering, and speak His seven wondrous dying words from the Cross. As a Christian man, a citizen of heaven, I have both the right and the power to extend to myself

the indulgence of using intoxicating drink. If I do so, I cannot place myself by identification by the side of my fallen brother, whose only chance of cure lies in uncompromising abstinence. If I would take him by the hand, bid him fix his eyes on Jesus, and crucify the flesh, I must unfetter my heart and cleanse my hands by first bearing myself the cross I am asking him to take up.

For, my total abstaining brethren, if we would deeply influence the souls of others we must be wholly in the Master's spirit. Let us beware how we conjure with His name while our heart is far from Him. In casting out devils—and drink is a devil if ever there was one in solution, precipitation, or incarnation in this world—the heavenly citizen must keep in touch with

his Master; and whether he eat or drink, or abstain from eating or drinking, he must do it, not for his own satisfaction but for the glory of God. St. Francis de Salis is said to have entered, after intense prayer, the iron cage of a dangerous maniac, and completely subdued him; without this constant communion with God and intensity and frequency in prayer, we modern exorcisers are in jeopardy of a repetition of the "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" Hidden in Him, our work as Temperance reformers, though marred by our imperfection, and hindered by opposition, shall be memorable in God's sight, for there shall be over it the mystic light which gleams from the foundation-stone of the Heavenly City, of which it is said, "THE TWELFTH AN AMETHYST."

WHAT CAN THE CLERGY DO?

"Like people like priest."—HOSEA iv. 9.

IT has been said in the article upon Impurity that it is one characteristic of an age of luxury to deprecate plain speaking about plain sins; to gloss over, with the meretricious tinsel of euphemism, notorious vices that eat like a canker into the heart of society; it is one of the deceits of so-called civilization to endure unblushingly the outward manifestations of evil, and prudishly to hide the head when such evils are denounced by their proper names. Such was not the custom of the fearless apostle St.

Paul, from whose pen has emanated the Epistle to the Galatians; and the plain, unvarnished tale of deadly sins, enumerated in the fifth chapter under the heading of "works of the flesh," breathes a refreshing atmosphere of candour, and encourages all Christian ministers to clear themselves from the imputation.

> "Who dares think one thing and another tell,
> My soul detests him as the gates of hell."

When society is ashamed to sin, it will be time enough for Christian ministers to be ashamed to speak of sin; and in this article we have to speak of sin—of foul, treacherous, fascinating sin; of sin which is the parent of impurity, infidelity, suffering, suicide, murder; of sin that knows no distinction between rich and poor, man and woman, learned and ignorant; of sin that stamps its cursed label,

like the brand of Cain, upon the besotted features of men and women made in the image of their God, saying—See, here are those redeemed by the blood of the Cross, dedicated body, soul, and spirit to the Lord, and it is written in their faces that their God is their belly.

It would be an easy matter to fill reams of paper with statistics of our English shame. They have been collected in ghastly and overwhelming array by Mr. William Hoyle; they are within the reach of all; and they prove beyond a shadow of doubt that misery, brutality, and crime are prevailing to a most alarming extent; that there is an evil influence abroad, neutralizing every effort, mocking every exertion for the promotion of the well-being of the people. It would be bad enough if this national destroyer con-

fined himself to binding grievous burdens upon the pockets of the community; that in days when legitimate trade is depressed and honest men of business are struggling hard with impending poverty, he should annually scatter to the winds one hundred and thirty millions, which, if circulated through useful branches of commerce, would impart prosperity to all; that, of the millions of rate-supported paupers, who tax so sorely the resources of men of anxious toil, he should claim three out of every four as his own production. The mere money tax might be endured. But from the length and breadth of the land there comes a cry of human suffering, human agony, human death; the most fearful crimes are committed every day,—brutal assaults by fathers upon their children, mothers upon their infants, men upon

each other; and judges, coroners, magistrates, doctors, hangmen, all give the same unvarying testimony—strong drink is alone, they say, the cause. One hundred and eighty thousand persons are licensed to procure their livelihood by flooding the country with strong drink. These occurrences are the logical consequence; and the wealth, the peace, the religion, the prosperity of this great nation are slowly, but surely, going down before the pestilence. The most terrible proof of the extent to which this devilish epidemic is infecting the mainspring of the life of the nation, and one which cannot too often be repeated, is to be found in the report of the visiting justices of the Westminster House of Correction, which exposes the appalling fact that in one year between five and six thousand women were convicted

of drunkenness in this place of punishment alone.

But in spite of the publicity which is given in the daily journals to the fruits of England's national sin, the worst results of it never see the light in the newspapers or the blue-book. There are working for God in parts of London, and other great cities, devoted ones who are spending their lives in striving to cast the purifying salt of the gospel of Christ into the foul pool of iniquity. They could tell you of the dark deeds that are done in the so-called homes of the drunkard ; they could tell you of the cruel blows that fall thick on wife and child ; they could tell you of wife and mother lying senseless from some savage assault, all through the long night until dawn peeps in at the window ; and the endurance, the forgiveness, the hope for better things in

the heart of the poor brave woman constrains her to silence, and the outside world knows nothing of her secret suffering.

Now what is the duty of the minister of the gospel in conditions such as these? I do not mean to imply that the ministers of the gospel have a monopoly of the responsibility for the souls of those who are perishing through drink: the drunkenness of England is everybody's responsibility. Drunkenness impoverishes the people, increases taxation, limits the producing power of the nation—it is, therefore, a question for the statesman; drunkenness deteriorates the race, renders life less worth living by increasing its sorrows, multiplying its perils, aggravating its evils—it is, therefore, a question for the philanthropist, for the pioneer of national liberty. Our ears are tickled in vain by the repetition

of smart epigrams as to England being "better free than sober," for we recollect how such epigrams are annihilated by anticipation in the words of Byron—

"Think'st thou that there is no tyranny but that
Of blood and chains? The despotism of vice,
The weakness, the wickedness of luxury,
The negligence, the apathy, the evils
Of sensual sloth, produce ten thousand tyrants."

But drunkenness locks up the kingdom of heaven, bars the channels of grace between the soul of man and the life-giving Spirit of God, defiles the temple of the Holy Ghost, crucifies the Son of God afresh and puts Him to an open shame, is earthly, sensual, devilish; and therefore it is pre-eminently a question for the accredited shepherds of the souls of men.

One of England's greatest statesmen once

said, "If this evil is to be effectually dealt with, you must not look to the world or the legislature to take the initiative, *the Church of Christ must strike the blow;*" and it is *we* who have been solemnly set apart by ordination to fight the battle of the King of kings, who are constrained to spend and be spent in liberating the souls whose cure and government has been committed to us, from the power of the accursed idol before whom they are bowing down. When *we* are indifferent, unenthusiastic, temporizing, in the presence of overwhelming evils such as these, we are but caricatures—not likenesses—of our Divine Master. When we timidly hold ourselves aloof from this special development of the battle between heaven and hell, when we take shelter behind the motto, *quieta non movere*, we are as those

"Who swore the love
Of souls had drawn them to the Church—yet strewed
The path that led to hell with tempting flowers,
And in the ears of sinners as they took
The way to death they whispered peace."

Yes, it is *our* question! It is our question by the sacredness of our high calling, by the Name we bow before; it is our question, because we are not reformers of society, but physicians of souls, because with us eternity overshadows time, because we are bound to view man as an immortal being in peril by sin, in pity for the miseries of which our Master wept on Olivet, in atonement for the guilt of which He bled on Calvary.

Now what can we as accredited ministers do to lessen the causes, to diminish the effects, of this torrent of evil? I do not believe it possible for one of us, who has heartily realized the magnitude of the evil,

to kneel down before our God with the prayer, "Lord, what wilt *Thou* have *me* to do?" without being at once commissioned to our corner of the vineyard. But this we can do—we can divest our minds of prejudice, we can stop our ears to those who would soothe us into inaction by bidding us leave the battle to the gradual influence of increasing knowledge and refinement. We can reflect upon the trifling influence knowledge and refinement have had in the past in purifying the heart of sinning humanity. Knowledge and refinement! Were they wanting to Charles Lamb, the poet and the essayist? and did they render less bitter that pathetic wail, "From what have I fallen, if the child that I remember was indeed myself"? Knowledge and refinement! Are they wanting to those high-born names

which bespatter the pages of our newspapers with the filth of the divorce court? And it is the testimony of the leading judge of that court of Sodom, that nine out of ten of the cases that come before him are the results of intemperance. First, then, we can set our faces as a flint against these commonplaces, which do but mock the agony of perishing thousands.

Again, believing that the peril of souls is of more importance than the traditions of society, the interests of a particular trade, the platitudes of the press, the babblings of shallow political triflers, we can shake ourselves free from what one has well termed "the devil's cobwebs of guilty custom and guilty acquiescence." Thus, hitherto, we have perhaps been tolerating evils rather than make ourselves unpopular by waging

war against them. *Now* we can become aggressive; we can constantly keep the question before the notice of magistrates, landowners, and the public. At times of election we can show by our exertions and our votes that we are in *earnest.*

We can engage a professional man to oppose at every brewster sessions the issue of fresh licences. We can add to our parochial organization an earnest temperance missionary, whose one duty is to search for the fallen, to encourage the waverers, to form public opinion. We can shake ourselves free from all complicity, by declining to sign any publican's testimonial; by refusing ever to lease an acre of glebe for building purposes without a stringent covenant to exclude public-houses.

We shall possibly become unpopular, the

drunkards will make songs upon us, the public-house world will hate us. *So much the better for us.* We are striking a blow for Him whom the world hated before it hated us. We shall be freely told that by crusading against the interests of a powerful, charitable, state-protected trade, we are jeopardizing the stability of the Church, and alienating men from our ministry. If it were so, then perish the Establishment that cannot stand without such crutches. But it is NOT true. The best claim the Establishment can make upon the confidence of the nation is her readiness to dare all in her effort to obliterate national sins. The surest reply the individual clergyman can make to those who revile him for crusading against vice is the life of practical, courageous, self-denying usefulness, for "*cujus vita fulgor, ejus*

verba tonitrua." I am taking it for granted that in every parish there will be *first*, a Temperance Society, and attached to it a Band of Hope. Years ago the good Bishop Stanley, of Norwich, spoke with a prophet's utterance, and said: "I speak after much reflection, and as in the presence of God: I am fully persuaded that temperance societies will be found the great regenerators of the country." Yes, and they will be found also the life and soul of home mission work; they will become the nucleus of Bible classes, prayer-meetings and confirmation classes. Where a thorough-going temperance society has been working in a parish, its effects are so marked that you are able to say, "Happy are the people that are in such a case; yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God." And, *secondly*, a really good

Temperance Refreshment-room,—not a dingy, fly-blown kennel of discomfort, but a bright, cheerful, gas-lit tavern, where politics may be talked, and refuge may be had from the discomfort of washing-day, without the assistance of that which men "put into their mouths to steal away their brains."

I have but imperfectly indicated some of the directions in which practical work may be done. If any are induced by these words to gird up their loins and plunge into the battle, I can assure them, from practical experience, that an abundant reward even in this world will attend them. It is a noble strife, for the battle is the Lord's. Under the banner of the Cross it must be fought; that banner is our lock of strength against the Philistine; without it we become as other men.

And when blessing and success attend our efforts, when returning prodigals are kneeling at our altars; when, co-operating with the Spirit of God, we have helped to heal the bitter waters of the world, self must be utterly forgotten, the glory must be rendered to God, and we must echo the words of Elisha when he cast the salt into the bitter waters of Jericho: "Thus saith the Lord, *I* have healed these waters."

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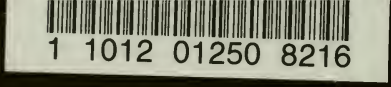
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